

Interviews

Contents

1. Dale Gibson, Edinburgh Palette.....	1
2. Lauren Mclaughlin, Artist, Spilt Milk Gallery (Quality Yard Resident).....	3
3. Rosemary Taylor, Leith Artist.....	7
4. Olivia, Artist, Exhibitions and Events Coordinator, DOK Artist Space.....	8
5. Emily Moore, Leith Artist.....	9

1. Dale Gibson, Edinburgh Palette

Email: dale@edinburghpalette.co.uk Tel: 07789 151 917



EDINBURGH PALETTE

Summary:

In 2008 Edinburgh Palette leased several floors of St Margarets House, a vacant ex-office building on London Road. It now occupies the whole building. They are a charity who lease the building at a discounted rate whilst the current owners find a buyer for the building.

Open seven days a week from 8am to 10pm. Closed 3-4 days over Christmas and New Year.

Projects:

Edinburgh Palette – predicted to stay open until June 2020. Full.

525 Ferry Road, NW Edinburgh – “Filling up fast”. More community projects and less artists. 100,000 sq foot office building providing open plan and 83 single unit studio spaces to creatives, start-up companies, social enterprises and charities. An animation company have requested 100 desks.

Stanley Street Container Village, Portobello/Duddingston – on derelict land. Ready by summer 2019. A hub for creatives, health and wellbeing groups, service providers, social enterprises and small start-ups

Contracts

- 6 month contracts
- One months deposit and first months rent up front. Three months notice (although they allow people to give 1 month in practise)

Artists are used to temporary contracts, so the uncertainty of the building is not a problem. Community organisations looking for more stability, longer term contracts.

They don't vet tenants, they try and say yes to everything. “Looking for energy. If they do well you do well.”

Rent:

- Rent is all-inclusive. No service charge.
- Rent does vary on what the tenant can afford. Dale asks for their budget and sees if they can agree to raise in 18 months time.
- No complaints, even though everyone pays different amounts.
- Some pay and never come in. Some just use it as storage. Balances out.

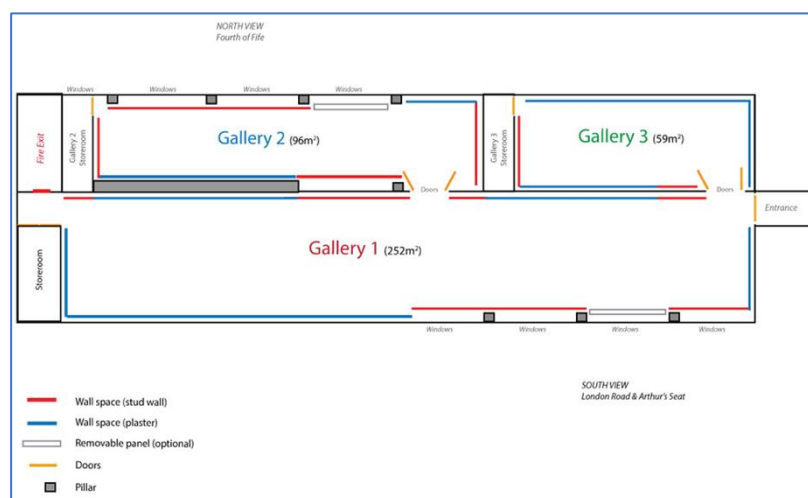
Studios

- Sell studios to rent by “the window “(all windows are the same size).
 - 1 window, 100 sq ft, £150 per month
 - 2 windows, 200 sq ft, £230 per month
 - 3 windows, 300 sq ft, £345 per month
- Tried letting by sq foot, but the artists didn't get it



Galleries

- Gallery rental:
 - Gallery 1, 252m², £180 a week.
 - Gallery 2, 96m², £120 a week.
 - Gallery 3, 59m², £90 a week.
- Minimum 2 week hire.
- Deposit of £50.
- They could charge more, but they get 52 weeks usage and don't have to staff it.



Infrastructure and Services

- “Design for self-service.” Don't have a reception desk if you can get away with it.
- Electricity - cost and admin of having electricity meters makes it not worth it. Only put in meters for high usage e.g. pottery.
- Free tea, coffee and biscuits.
- Vending machine.
- One or two Belfast sinks per floor. Charge studios more if they want their own. One good wash up area, good size sink, easy clean room, turps barrel. Contractor takes away the barrels every few months - fire proof.

Staff

- Try to employ as few people as possible.
- There is always a member of staff on duty when the building is open, 8am to 10pm
- Over the 3 properties, they have 2,000 artists - 4 full time staff, 2 part time.
- Cleaners – employed through an agency. Limits staffing issues. “If you concentrate on good housekeeping, people treat the building with respect.”
- Staffing costs are the biggest costs - try to keep the numbers low.
- No receptionist.

Artists requirements:

- Artists wants and needs are the same as the office staff, they mainly keep to standard office hours.
- Want to be treated with respect (place is clean, toilet clean, toilet paper and coffee good quality).
- Don't want open plan, want a door that locks.
- Community. There is collaboration between artists but it's not forced.

Other:

Hot desking - talking with melting pot. “A lot of staff costs for little return.”

OSCAR registered - can't just be a landlord - arts program and gallery, freebies helps with this.

Marketing - newsletter, twitter, website. All word of mouth. “The city is so starved of space for artists, drama clubs and community activities, word goes round quickly”.

2. Laura Simpson - Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop

(12 Nov 2019)

- Size of our studios and the cost: They are about 5 m x 8 m with roof lights and sinks, 24 hour access and cost **£142 per month inc vat**.
- They are full and could definitely fill 4 more studios.

Ways they could help – admin, set-up, selection – as part of ESW:

- I or a colleague could advise on how to describe, set up, and recruit artists to use the studios and hand everything over to Heart of Newhaven, perhaps remaining on the selection panel.
- We could devise and run the studios, in terms of admin, so would promote them alongside our own, do the leasing and finance admin integrated to our own systems and run all the selections. We probably don't make any money in real terms from that activity anyway (we currently don't), but we would understand that some would need to go to VPS organisation as they would be looking after the building and providing Heat / Light / Power / Insurance / Water etc. That payment would therefore be less than £142 per month, minus vat. There could be a really strong identity for these studios at the school but still as part of ESW community where we are known for quality and progressive contemporary art.
- Other organisations like OOTB and Coburg House also run studio complexes and are more commercially minded than us. We would be coming from a hyper local point of view though and the studio holders could potentially draw on the further resources of our workshops potentially.

Funding for residencies:

- VPS could apply to Open Fund through Creative Scotland (we can't really do this because we are an RFO with Creative Scotland) but we could write the application in collaboration with

the Vic PS people. It could be for a residency for a year, or for several for 6 months, and would be designed for the artist to get a lot out of it in terms of development but also be able to get to know the community and be able to have input into the activity of the centre (as I imagine that everyone wants it to be animated and connected). The deadline for Creative Scotland Open Fund is rolling and I think takes either 8 or 12 weeks for an answer depending on the size of the ask. It's a considerable amount of work to make one of those applications so if there was any freelance money available that would be good to have some but it is something we could consider giving in pro bono in some circumstances.

- Rate of pay for artists, including residency rates:
https://www.artistsunion.scot/pay_rates_2019
https://www.artistsunion.scot/pay_rates_2019
- For an artist in residency scheme, I suggest a rough budget of:
 - Experienced artist for a year, they get a free studio with no costs at Vic PS, access to ESW workshops and fee of £21,414.
 - They would be present at Vic PS circa 3 days a week doing their own work, with one morning given over to working with a community group of their choosing.
 - There should be a materials budget for the group work of circa £6000 (for some set up equip and then about £50-100 materials per session)
 - There should be a budget to allow for events and a final outcome circa £5000 (for drinks and snacks, hiring equipment like a PA, building up an exhibition space, doing an exhibition elsewhere).
 - If there was a artistic programme member of staff at Vic PS then they could manage the person and project. If not there would need to be an external facilitator, could be a member of ESW staff and if there was enough money it could be maybe £1500 (£100 a day for 15 days). We might need to add an overheads amount too if there was free use of our workshops as that costs a bit if it's heavy use.
 - Total £35914 - it's quite a lot. Things are possible on less but you can see why each part brings richness to the organisation, individual and community so stripping down diminishes that - which could be done in a calculated way to fit with whatever else was going on.

Idea scenario ESW working within the school?

- We could definitely fill 4 studios.
- I imagine for VPS having a room which could be used for messy workshops would be an advantage as many places, including schools, don't have this.
- If a large room was available which was open and airy, it might be possible to rent them as open plan spaces.
- I think that 24 hour access is quite important to our studio holders - but is something to consider in terms of the way that the building is set up.
- A workshop room benefits from being able to house at least 33 kids, as the classrooms there will be able to.
- Ideal plan is studios that have natural light. Classroom could be divided for artists - if rooms have to be decided up that would be a bigger cost.
- Small rooms could be useful.
- Traditional way of having arts studio is north facing windows. Defused light. Sinks. Lift for access. f

Funds:

- I don't think it would really generate much if any money. The rent payed is relatively low, if steady, but costs of H/L/P/ management are high.
- We run courses programme for adult education and for young people, it's difficult to get people to sign up sometimes, and if you pay people the correct rate to run the courses, it's difficult to make money. Just mentioning this as another element of potential non-income but good engagement.

Facilities (ideally):

- Lift access
- North facing windows (defused light)
- Sinks
- Potential to divide up large rooms
- 24 hour access for studios

Can write a studio plan.

- Imbed in the community. Unless there is another source of financial backing, running a small number of studios won't have a big impact on income. If only one studio, she could suggest things that would work well. If there are several studios.
- Arts in the area, using the workshops. Have an established selection process which they could extend to the other studios. Quality, artist development, etc.

3. Lauren Mclaughlin, Artist, Spilt Milk Gallery (Quality Yard Resident)

Artist and Art Tutor, Founder/Curator at Spilt Milk

Tel: 07557 331 316 Email: laurenmclaughlin.artist@gmail.com Web: www.laurenmclaughlin.co.uk , www.spiltmilkgallery.com

Currently renting studio space at Quality Yard, Martime Lane.

The spaces are very basic - painted chipboard walls and strip lighting, there is only one space with a window so the rest have no natural light, i guess this is reflected in the cheap price.

The owner has had a lot of interest in the spaces apparently!

What type of space would be ideal for most artists? E.g size, light etc

Most artists need a space that includes floor and wall space with a desk and chair. Although natural light is important for some painters, I've found that most artists are happy with a space that has good lighting such as daylight bulbs. A window with natural light is seen as a bonus!

I think the minimum space required would be around 3m x 2.5 - this is what I've seen in many studios as the smallest spaces available, and usually are set up as 'cubicle style' in an open plan room so that there is plenty wall spaces for artists to work on and hang their work.

The most important thing is the ability to be able to create a mess and leave it there so I would advise against fitting any sort of new flooring as this would most likely get ruined!

Artists also need to be able to drill and hammer into their walls, so keep this in mind.

What facilities would you need? E.g. storage, wifi, water etc

Painters will need access to a sink for washing brushes etc - if there are a lot of painters, sink areas can get quite messy!

Most studios include wifi and I think access to wifi would be preferable for most.

In terms of storage, this differs from studio to studio. If you were looking at a sort of open plan studio space shared between a few artists then I think you would need to look at getting some lockable storage for valuables? I've seen in other studios, artists are offered a lockable cabinet with their desk.

Would you look for a community of artists in a building or is it the space alone that is important?

Yes! An artist community is the most important part of having a studio. A lot of artists could potentially work at home or in a garage or something however being an artist can get lonely and so lots of us are keen to work with other artists for that sense of community and support. Even just to have someone to get a cuppa with is really valuable.

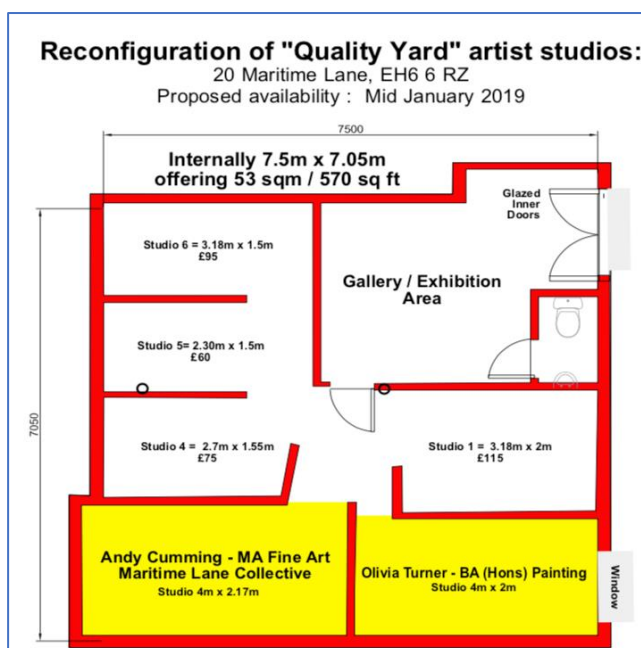
Is a shop or gallery in the building important?

I don't think this is vitally important for most artists however it is a real benefit to have a space to be able to exhibit. Studios at St Margarets House or Patriothall offer this opportunity however they don't tend to attract many outside visitors due to their location. I think the draw of Duncan Place is that it is in a great location and good transport links and because of the proposed mixed use of the building, if you were to offer some sort of gallery space I think artists would benefit from having more exposure for their work because of the many different people passing through the building. In saying that, if you did have a strong artist community down there, there could be more opportunities for the artists to link with other local businesses and venues and perhaps exhibition opportunities would evolve from this.

How much would you expect to pay in rent (and for what size)?

- For myself as a low income emerging artist who does not make an income from my work, I would expect to pay no more than £100 - £120 and I know most of my peers pay rent in this bracket for their spaces. Artists who are making a bit of an income from their practice, or have their own businesses (such as commercial illustrators) tend to pay much more for their own lockable room.

There tends to be two different types of studios - the more affordable options being a shared space with other artists such as the one I have. The alternative more expensive studios are those such as WASPS, Out of the Blue Drill Hall or St Mags where each artist has their own studio room with lockable door but they are housed within a community of artists, I think WASPS charge around £200-£250 for single studios. .



Would you prefer an all inclusive price or would you be happy to pay a service charge?

I would prefer to pay one rent which is inclusive of everything and I think most others would feel the same.

[“Huge waiting list for artists in the city” - is this true, do you know of any evidence?](#)

I'm not so sure about this one! I think there is always a long waiting list for single studio spaces at WASPS, Out of the Blue at St Mags (although they have had a lot of free studios lately after announcing closure of the building).

In terms of shared studio spaces, I see quite regular adverts for spaces at Abeymount studios, and I know Interview 11 have plenty free studios but they are based in Muirhouse which is perhaps why. There will always be a large demand for 'affordable' studios. The studio which I have just rented at Maritime Place is cheap - I'm only paying £95 per month but it is literally a space, its quite small, no natural light and I'm imagining will be freezing but its all I can afford just now. I know that the owner put an advert on Creative Scotland (where I saw it) and he said he got 6 people interested - not sure whether that is huge demand!

[Can you recommend anyone else who might be helpful to talk to?](#)

I am a member of many online artist groups and communities such as the SSA, Women in the Arts, RSA etc which have facebook groups. If you had an online poll or survey, I would be happy to share it with all the artists I know and share in these groups.

4. Rosemary Taylor, Leith Artist

Email: rosemarytaylor5@gmail.com

[What type of space would be ideal for most artists? E.g size, light etc](#)

I feel a space that is square or a well proportioned rectangle is more desirable than something long and narrow.

I prefer natural light and although some artists (painters) would prefer north light I have no preference but blinds on windows are very useful.

I would view 15msq as the minimum I could work in. Communal working spaces are not the answer for all artists and I would prefer a space of my own.

[What facilities would you need? E.g. storage, wifi, water etc](#)

A shared storage space that is equally divided among tenants is desirable as it helps avoid studios becoming over cluttered and makes it easier to work.

Wifi is desirable for answering emails and doing research rather than downloading large files.

Belfast sinks for cleaning equipment are really necessary and they should be separate from water for domestic use.

[Would you look for a community of artists in a building or is it the space alone that is important?](#)

I would be looking for a community of artists - it doesn't have to be a large community and a small communal area for making coffee etc would be good.

[Is a shop or gallery in the building important?](#)

I don't feel a gallery or shop is important to me

[How much would you expect to pay in rent \(and for what size\)?](#)

I would expect to pay approx £1,800 per annum for 15msq

[Would you prefer an all inclusive price or would you be happy to pay a service charge?](#)

I would be looking for an all inclusive price at the above rate

“Huge waiting list for artists in the city” - is this true, do you know of any evidence?

I am aware that there are always a number of people turning up to studio viewings and in some cases it appears to depend on who you know whether you get a studio rather than there being a transparent waiting list system. I feel a lot of artists would like to have a studio but are completely priced out due to demand being higher than the number available. I often hear this being said at viewings.

Can you recommend anyone else who might be helpful to talk to?

I can't think of anyone else who would be able to give helpful information at the moment - most of my friends work from home, have built a studio in their garden or have a space in privately owned studios which give them a higher level of security. I know several people who have moved away from Edinburgh to find affordable workspace.

Leith is home to the highest number of creative people within Edinburgh but it has very few artist studios. There are a higher number of spaces for designers and small start-ups. Unfortunately there is a general lack of suitable pre-used buildings available for conversion for studio provision but the possibility of studios in the heart of Leith is very exciting.

5. Olivia, Artist, Exhibitions and Events Coordinator, DOK Artist Space

Email: info@dokartistspace.org Tel: 0781 768 1991

I think it would be brilliant if the building was available for artist studios and workshops. There is a real lack of artist spaces and it seems to constantly being reduced.

What type of space would be ideal for most artists? E.g size, light etc

I think it would be important to have variety of spaces available as everyone is working on different budgets. Good size studios are really hard to find though with good natural light. I think 4 x 2m is a good space size wise.

What facilities would you need? E.g. storage, wifi, water etc

I think most people expect WiFi these days but our studios didn't due to location and that didn't seem to put people, off especially painters. A sink to wash brushes and stuff is always good. Plug sockets in each space. Then just the essentials like a shared toilet.

Would you look for a community of artists in a building or is it the space alone that is important?

I personal wouldn't mind either. I think with space some rare in the city people would be looking for either. Even if the spaces were closed of people would still feel part of a community and could host open studios bringing everyone together.

Is a shop or gallery in the building important?

A gallery space would be a bonus for me. The only thing with this and a shop is it would need to managed which would result in having to hire someone. I feel at the moment a lot of peoples main focus is the studio but the gallery is a place where you could receive another income from renting it out.

How much would you expect to pay in rent (and for what size)?

I have just moved studio and for £125 a month a get a studio 3 x 2m with a window and service charged all included. I am aware however this is quite cheap compared to some of the other studios in Edinburgh.

Would you prefer an all inclusive price or would you be happy to pay a service charge?

I would prefer to pay an all inclusive price so you can budget for each month.

“Huge waiting list for artists in the city” - is this true, do you know of any evidence?

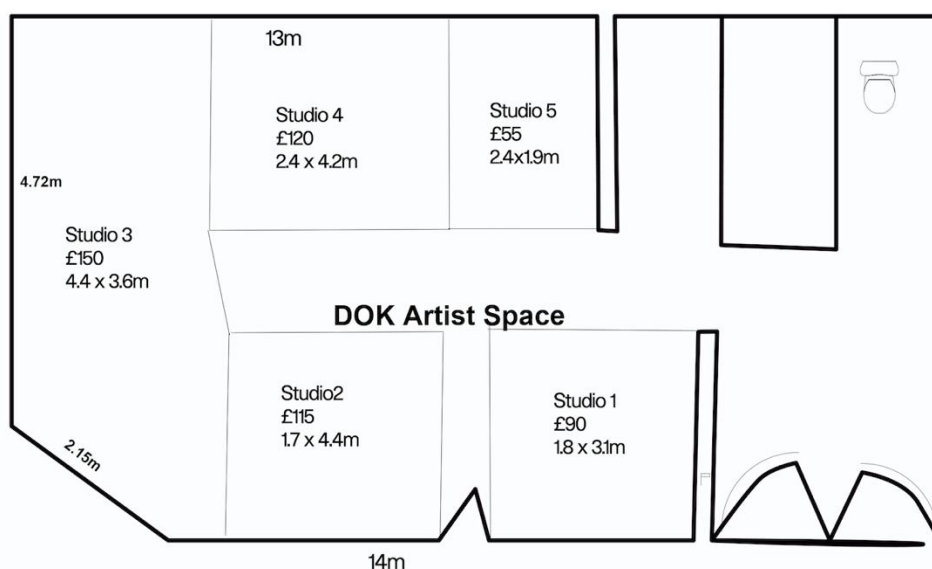
This is true. With DOK closing I have now had to look for a new studio and I have really struggled. I was extremely lucky with the one I found as the landlord became a member at DOK and I caught the studios at the right time. On all the other studios in Edinburgh I have been put on a waiting list as no one had anything available.

Can you recommend anyone else who might be helpful to talk to?

Maybe the other studios in an around Edinburgh to get an idea of their pricing. Like Out of the Blue, Coburg House, Wasps, Beaver Hall, St Margaret's house.

Would you be happy to share the cost of your current studio? Rent, what's included and size?

Yes that is fine no problem at well. I have attached a floor plan of our studios. As part of our rent it included free use of our upstairs gallery space when it was available and use of a small kitchen area (sink, kettle, microwave). We did not offer WIFI.



6. Emily Moore, Leith Artist

Contact: art@emilymooreart.com

What type of space would be ideal for most artists? E.g size, light etc

Most artists would be looking for a spacious studio with a good natural light source or alternatively 'daylight' strip lighting.

What facilities would you need? E.g. storage, wifi, water etc

A studio with allocated storage elsewhere in the building would be ideal. Especially places where you can put large pieces of artwork and paintings. Access to a sink is vital for washing your paint brushes...etc. and a separate kitchen area would also be useful. Wifi too!

Would you look for a community of artists in a building or is it the space alone that is important?

I would look to be in a community of artists, it's nice to be surrounded by people working in a similar area to you.

Is a shop or gallery in the building important?

No need for a shop but a communal project/gallery space would be ideal for use of residents.

How much would you expect to pay in rent (and for what size)?

My studio is roughly 10.5x13.5ft and I pay around £130 per month. I would maybe stretch to £150/175 if the space was right.

Would you prefer an all inclusive price or would you be happy to pay a service charge?

All inclusive!

“Huge waiting list for artists in the city” - is this true, do you know of any evidence?

Yes, I know lots of friends who have struggled to find studios and have had to move into spaces that are not ideal but have had no other choice. I also have lots of friends currently renting in St Margarets House which is also due for closure.